Assistance for Infrastructure Investment

780. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:
SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian fanners are not able to maintain the high standards set by agricultural producers from rich countries; and

(b) the measures proposed to assist them in infrastructure investment like storage, processing and refrigerated transport for quality upgradation of agricultural exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) Maintenance of high standards for export of agricultural produce is a relative concept. Though India is a large exporter of agricultural products, there is scope to further increase its agricultural exports by improving the quality and packaging of the agricultural and processed food products, in keeping with the Internationally determined sanitary and phytosanitary standards.

(b) Some of the steps taken/proposed to be taken, specifically for enhancement of exports of agricultural and processed food products, include:

1. Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical knowhow of farmers through demonstrations, trainings and publicity, rejuvenation of old orchards, area expansion, supply of minikits for vegetables, improving productivity and training of farmers.
2. Provision of soft loans for setting up grading/processing centres, auction platforms, ripening/curing chambers and quality testing equipment.
3. Providing financial assistance to exporters/growers/Co-operative Societies for development of infrastructural facilities such as purchase of specialised transport units, polishnmert of pre-coohing/cold storage facilities, integrated post-harvest handling systems (pack houses).

4. Grant of financial assistacne for improved packaging, strengthening of quality control and modernization of processing units.

5. Establishment of vapour heat treatment facilities for eliminating pest incubation in the product, especially the mangoes, for gaining access to overseas markets.

6. Grant of Air Freight Subsidy for exports of floricultural items and selected fresh fruits and vegetables and fruits.

7. Arranging promotional campaigns such as buyer-seller meets and participation in important international fairs and exhibitions.

8. Setting up of integrated cargo handling and cold storage facilities at various International Airports for handling export of perishable items such as fresh fruits and vegetables.

9. Providing assistance in development of data base and dissemination of market information.

10. Providing assistance for setting up of laboratories for testing of products to ensure quality, lack of contamination and ensuring freedom from bacteria and fungi.

Schemes for Scientifically Development of Cash Crops

781. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any schemes under Government to scientifically develop the cash crops in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the amount allocated, amount actually released and expenditure incurred under the schemes during the last year, State-wise and the amount released so far for the current year; and

(c) the extent of implementation of these schemes for the development of cash crops in the States during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a)